



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# *What is a community food initiative?*

Community Food Initiatives foster communities where everyone has access to an equitable, inclusive, and thriving local food systems.

Here is an example...



**HOME**  
Helping Old Moat Eat

# Case Study

Community Food Initiatives

# Project Background and Objectives:

The Helping Old Moat Eat (HOME) is one of the projects run by Sow the City, which set out to provide emergency food to alleviate food poverty and lift barriers to accessing food. It ran between 2013 and 2016.

HOME provided services to address some of the longer term causes of food poverty including improving cooking and budgeting skills, improving access to affordable, nutritious food, and healthy, community eating opportunities.

The food access was accompanied with activities that HOME ran to create the sense of community, provide education to enable participants to better understand food and teach valuable cookery skills, all with the aim to help understand the components of a balanced diet to improve health outcomes for the individuals and their families.

Community champions were appointed and provided with training, and all who attended were provided with a free raised bed, made from timber offcuts by the contractor Wates. Also compost, free seeds, 1 hour's advice at home about how to achieve maximum success and a potted Sunset variety apple tree. This approach and process was deemed as a hugely successful model to support novice growers.

HOME also provided a healthy take away service for those who didn't have the time, facilities or skills to cook, this was made up of weekly lunchtime services set up in the heart of the estates lasting 2 hours each session. There were a range of cuisines to cater for all needs and encourage new experiences from vegan curries, to soups and street food at £1 each. The takeaway service saw the development of returning and loyal customers, who embraced the community engagement and social aspects as much as the nutritional benefits.



*The HOME project was awarded £18K, from the MCC Food Poverty Fund with Southway as a key partner.*

## Project Achievements and Benefits Provided:



*"I made jam  
and chutneys  
from produce I  
had grown for  
the harvest event"*

The HOME project resulted in some exciting and positive outcomes, seeing over 500 people engaged in discussions about food poverty and the sessions offering basic food advice. Four local residents were trained to be Food Champions and two HOME community events were held with over 100 people attending. A food growing demonstration garden was created in the middle of the estate for training local residents.

**27**

people were  
provided with  
raised beds for  
growing food.

**200**

healthy take  
away meals  
were sold.

**30**

people  
completed  
courses on how  
to cook on a  
budget.

## Training and investment:

- Improvements to raised beds so the centre could be used as food growing training venue for signposted tenants
- £400 on materials spent
- Growing training (27 attendees)
- Cooking training (21 attendees)
- Produce from the centre's garden used in cookery sessions
- Produce from the demonstration garden used by the budding chefs in sessions.

# Project Challenges and Key Learnings:

Social media platforms were identified as critical to the project's engagement.

The project identified that there was a clear demand for broader services that went beyond the scope of what HOME could deliver.

Despite high level of engagement between 2013 and 2016 this then came to an end, due to the funding ending.

## Future Plans:

A range of further projects under Sow the City have since taken off, and continue to thrive addressing and supporting communities, social isolation, food poverty and health.

In 2020/21 following the first wave of the Covid pandemic, the need for projects such as HOME emerged, and HOME ran two hugely successful projects in two of Manchester's most deprived wards.

*"It helped me to start growing for myself, by giving me seeds and told me what to do with them. HOME has encouraged me to become a more active member of my community."*



[Website](#)



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*With thanks to HOME (Helping Old Moat Eat)  
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